

# Chapter 3

## Humanistic Training and Community Engagement for Modern Policing

### ABSTRACT

*Chapter three is divided into three distinct sections. The first section emphasizes the crucial role of proper training in fostering successful police/citizen relationships. The second section introduces a theory that Sherwin developed to explain its rationale and purpose within the training process. The third section addresses the ongoing criticism and disrespect faced by law enforcement and the criminal justice system. Training for police officers should be continuous, frequent, and redundant throughout their careers.*

### INTRODUCTION

Training for police officers should be continuous, frequent, and redundant throughout their careers. Police officers are required to be proficient in the use of their firearm. There is a mandatory yearly qualification requirement to be proficient in using their firearm. If a police officer fails to pass the qualification requirement they will be removed from service; fired. Much like a police officer's requirement to qualify with their duty firearms annually, formal training that expands their knowledge and provides them with the verbal and physical skills to confidently perform their duties must also be a requirement. This training should adhere to structured schedule with purposeful frequency. This training must be progressive, informative, timely, and should encompass more than just legal knowledge, rules, and regulations. It should integrate philosophical and sociological theories that provide police officers

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with humanistic skills, values, and logic. This approach aims to replace hubris with empathy, all while maintaining the lawful authority and purpose of law enforcement.

Police officers are routinely exposed to situations and issues that cause stress. And there are always unknown factors that prompt a normative ethical response of “What should I do?” (Pollock, 2019). Effective training provides police officers with internal strength and confidence to respond to situations rather than react impulsively. Human nature is complex, and people respond to situations in various ways for many reasons. Training equips police officers with an understanding of why people think and act the way they do, fostering empathy and insight. Additionally, training instills self-awareness, helping police officers recognize how they appear and sound to others. This awareness allows them to self-reflect, refocus, and commit to their professional purpose. Training helps police officers remain focused on their central purpose; ensuring that their actions, methods, and values align with their role as community protectors.

In this chapter, Sherwin introduces a theory rooted in humanism, conceptualized through the imagery of *Conterminous Spheres of Dependency*. Each sphere is framed within thematic clusters, which I explain in detail throughout the chapter. These thematic clusters serve as the foundation for understanding the humanistic principles critical to law enforcement interactions. The theory operates on two key tenets:

First, it is vital that police officers are equipped with humanistic values. These values are highlighted in the themes of each sphere. These values provide guidance to police officers in their interactions with citizens for ensuring empathy, respect, and understanding. Second, the theory emphasizes the necessity of providing police officers with the essential skills to interact effectively with individuals experiencing mental health episodes.

Mental health episode calls for service have reached critical levels of urgency that require compulsory intervention. This most likely will necessitate police intervention. Therefore, it is vital that police officers receive progressively formalized training in Crisis Intervention Teams (CIT). However, for these teams to function successfully, it is paramount that the officers selected for CIT training embody humanistic values. Without this, the program risks failure in fulfilling its community obligation and purpose.

The chapter concludes by addressing the criticism and disrespect often directed at law enforcement and the criminal justice system. To explore this issue further, Sherwin introduces another theory he developed: *Fear, Anger, Hate*. This theory examines the underlying reasons why society tends to view police officers through a negative lens. While the themes of fear, anger, and hate are not new, my theory offers a fresh perspective on why these emotions persist and how they can remain unresolved. The concept of fear, anger, and hate has many causes, and while these emotions are natural, they have significant consequences when left unaddressed.

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